

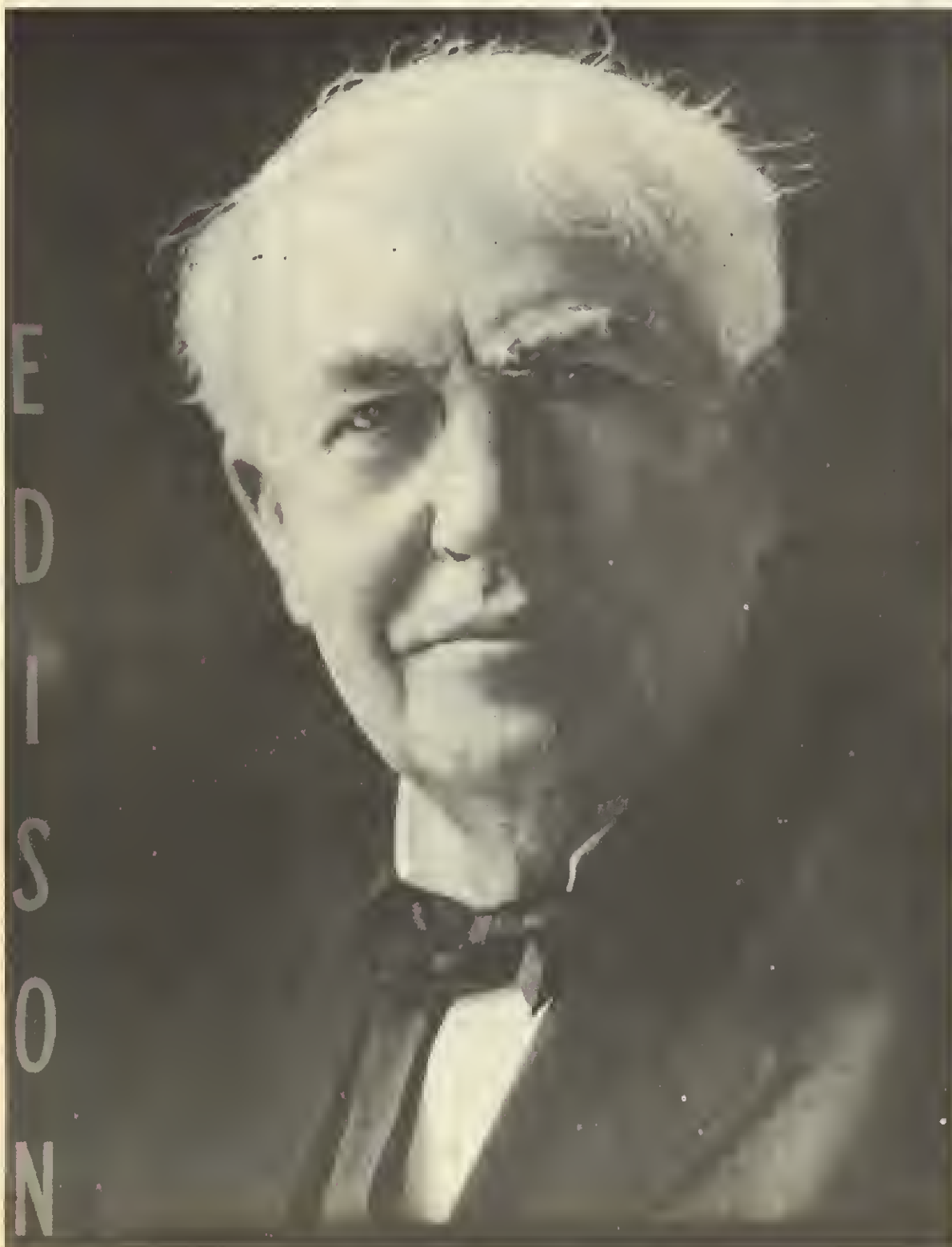
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SEPT. / OCT. 1958

MAGAZINE OF RECORD STATISTICS AND INFORMATION

record research



A HISTORIC COLLECTION OF EDISON SUPPLEMENTS

Form No. 627 February, 1905

SUPPLEMENT TO RECORD CATALOGUE

**EDISON
GOLD MOULDED
RECORDS**

Thomas A. Edison.

NATIONAL PHONOGRAPH CO.
ORANGE, N.J.
NEW YORK
CHICAGO
SAN FRANCISCO
LONDON
PARIS
BERLIN
BRUSSELS

EVERY Edison Phonograph Record is sold by the National Phonograph Company, or its agents, at the price of 20 cents a year, 2 cents a copy.

No. 9953. Jubilee Minstrels

The New Edison Records for October

Vol. V. OCTOBER, 1908 No. 4

**THE NEW
PHONOGRAM**

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE NATIONAL
PHONOGRAPH CO., ORANGE, NEW JERSEY

20 CENTS A YEAR 2 CENTS A COPY



No. 9953. Jubilee Minstrels

The New Edison
Records for October

**Edison
Records
for
January
1912**

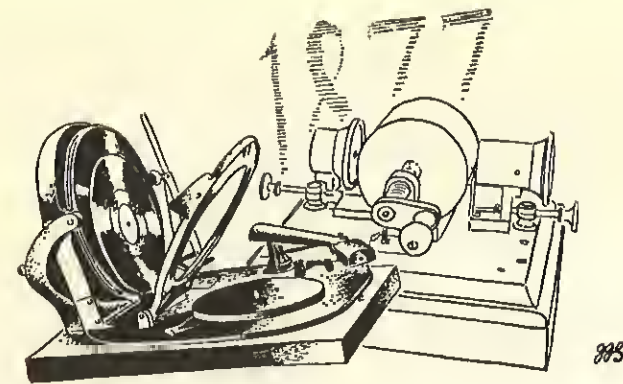
The Frank Croton Quartette

Edison

Recent Record Releases

CLAUDIA MUZIO

THE NEW EDISON



EDISON AND THE DIAMOND DISC

By Angus Joss

Mr. Joss of Joliet, Illinois is an old timer who needs no introduction to most readers. In the present article, he compiles many not widely known facts about Edison and his work on perfecting the phonograph and the record. It is fitting at the close of this year—the seventieth anniversary of Edison's first phonographic patent—that we publish these facts about the inventor and his favorite "brain-children".—Ed.

It is not generally known that Thomas A. Edison was the inventor of both the cylinder and the disc phonograph. In 1877 he filed for a patent on the cylinder, and soon after filed for a disc phonograph. When this latter patent was held up, due to some neglected detail, Edison dropped the matter on the premise that the disc would never amount to much. In steps taken toward perfecting the tin foil phonograph, a number of difficulties arose which made Edison seriously consider a disc machine to overcome them. Strange as it may seem, he foresaw a better surface than tin foil and proposed to substitute a diamond for the steel point. The experiments on the new disc machine were abandoned for a number of years due to pressure of business on other inventions that seemed more important to the great inventor.

By this time, Bell and Tainter had invented the wax record which had a better surface than tin foil. Edison had the former substance in mind for some years previous but was prevented from experimenting with it. Hence he returned in 1887 to the cylinder principle. There followed an extensive period of experimentation, well into 1890, during which time 82 patents were filed. It is interesting to note that as far back as 1887, Edison promised "to place before the world his phonograph or talking machine, perfected in such a manner as to faithfully record sounds of the human voice—utterances that can be readily reproduced many times." It is well to bear in mind that for 24 years Edison conscientiously endeavored to keep that promise, struggling against unyielding ob-

stacles. One day, in 1892, while talking to Philip G. Hubert at the new Orange laboratory, he said in a less confident moment: "There are some difficulties about the problem that seem insurmountable. I go on smoothly until at a certain point I run my head against a stone wall. I cannot seem to get under, around or over it. After batting my head against that wall until it aches, I go back to the beginning. It is absurd to say that because I can see no possible solution of the problem today, that I may not see one tomorrow. The very fact that this century has accomplished so much in the way of inventions, makes it more than possible that the next century will do far greater things."

Cylinder vs. Disc

It might be pertinent to explain here why Edison did not continue his experiments with a disc phonograph in the gay nineties. He was convinced that the cylinder was the technically correct principle of reproduction. Each groove was of the same length and all parts of the cylinder travelled at a constant rate and insured perfect pitch and uniform distribution of the indentations. There was also the economy and ease with which cylinders could be produced of a wax-like composition which closely resembled soap. Too, the article was economical for the consumer in that he might buy only the selection he wished; there was no reverse side which might seldom if ever be used. This fact was a selling point much overlooked and certainly an indispensable one in the production of a commodity intended for the masses. Since Edison wished to reach the masses, he chose the proper medium, for the cylinder had none of the complicated expensive problems that stood in the way of producing discs. This may sound illogical to the music lovers of today who are familiar with the large number of shellac discs now manufactured. However, Edison well knew the difficulties in the manufacture of discs. A wax disc would be subject to breakage and would

never approach the 500 plays attributed to the cylinder. He therefore continued to improve on the latter article. In another interview with Edison in 1893 he introduced a startling prediction that the time was near "when grand opera could be given [from a recording] at the Metropolitan Opera House, without any material change from the original and with artists and musicians long dead."

Shortly after the turn of the century, Edison said to his associates: "Let me try to develop an instrument which will be so perfect that its reproduction of music cannot be detected from the original music." Although, on previous occasions, they had seen Edison achieve the seemingly impossible, his subordinates were dubious, as they believed he had for once undertaken the impossible, even with an "Edison" at work. It seemed for a number of years that this would be the case. However, Edison was not discouraged. He worked night and day and literally thousands of experiments were tried. Problems of acoustics and chemistry, for which no solutions were known, had to be solved. It is no exaggeration to say that there never was an inventor except Edison, who would not have surrendered in the face of the insurmountable obstacles that confronted him. Many of these experiments would have delighted Ernst Chladni, who is often called the father of acoustics. An unexpected turn then took place in attempting to eliminate the metallic twang (which is still present) in the recording and reproducing mediums. In both his office and laboratory, Edison had stored hundreds of wax cylinders with recorded suggestions of novel methods which might have assisted in that objective.

The Recorder

It was evident that the recorder was the heart of the problem. Some comments by the inventor are pertinent at this point. "Overtones in music are as elusive as a ray of sunlight," he said, "yet their capture and preservation on a phonograph record is utterly essential to full perfect re-creation of an artist's performance. It is obvious that they cannot be preserved if their microscopic strength is dissipated in any way—a moving machine, for example. Years ago I recognized the fact that only through capturing the delicate and elusive overtones as well as the fundamental waves and faithfully recording them on a record, could phonograph music earn its right to a permanent place in the musical esteem of mankind. I have worked always with this goal in view. Nature has been reluctant, but one by one she has given up her secrets. Countless experiments in recording have taught us many vastly important tricks and processes. No one thing has captured the overtones for us."

The secrets of recording were known to Edison and a few of his most trusted associates. The size and style of diaphragms, the placing of the artists in relation to the acoustic horn—the fine points of the art—were never revealed. He did not tell the world how recording was accomplished, how he caught 80 per cent of the overtones, except that it was a combination of many little things that added up to maximum efficiency, dwarfing the recordings of other manufac-

EDISON

Diamond Disc
RECORDS



The
New Invention
of
Thos A Edison
Creator of
the Phonograph

turing concerns.

It may seem ironic to state that Edison's deafness was a help and not a hindrance. In listening to a voice he used a peculiarly shaped horn. He was so experienced that he at once distinguished the most minute changes of register, tremulo, non-periodic vibration, and many other infinitesimal defects that detract from the true beauty of vocal sounds. He could determine by estimation almost precisely the number of overtones and the rate of tremulo, and his conclusions were afterward verified by a microscopic examination of the voice record. Pitch could be reproduced but true timbre was lost due to lack of overtones. The hissing sounds and consonants were found lacking in reproduction. It was the lack of realism in the early phonograph music that Edison struggled to overcome.

The Best Groove

Edison had chosen, what he regarded as the best groove, the so-called "hill and dale." In this method of recording a delicate point cuts a groove of the same width with varying depth according to the action of the music. Fundamental notes made long waves, overtones made short and delicate ones on the slopes of the long waves. The stylus for playing fitted the groove snugly, gliding up and down under correct pressure and therefore followed the most minute waves. Edison spent 20 hours each day for over a year to obtain perfect results. He was by no means a fully equipped scientist and was famous less for strict originality than for dogged patience and subtle insight which enabled him to fructify other devices.

In the 1880's, Emil Berliner invented the lateral-cut disc record. Much thought and capital had been put into this invention, but in the early days of this century it was not regarded as a serious competitor of the hill-and-dale grooved record, despite the fact it had the advantage of volume and required no complicated system for a feeding device to propel the reproducer across the record. However, it had its disadvantages. The recording diaphragm was held sideways with the edge toward the side of the record. The groove was cut sideways to uniform depth. The middle of the groove did not fit it snugly for it swayed back and forth following the runs and twists of the grooves. As the needle ground its way along, it picked up particles of steel deposited by previous needles and ground them against the side walls of the grooves leaving deposits of its own to be ground in by the next needle used. Thus, the delicate engravings of the overtones, such few as were in the recording, were soon ground off. The reproduction therefore could be at its best only on the first note, and the first playing of the record. Each replaying left its irreplaceable alterations in the sound waves engraved on the disc. These, of course, became more and more noticeable.

A New Record

Let us leap over a span of years to a day in 1909, when Edison had occasion to visit his recording technician, Walter Miller, at his studio on lower Fifth Ave. in New York.

Miller called Edison's attention to the fact that the cylinder was losing ground with the public and was becoming increasingly difficult to market. The new smoother double shellac disc was proving a keen competitor. Miller assured Edison that the public wanted a disc machine, and he further advised the inventor that it was necessary for him to market one. Unbeknown to Edison, Miller had been experimenting with a disc machine for several years, and it was now revealed to the former. All of the numerous improvements of the cylinder recorder had been incorporated into the machine. Hence, Miller urgently importuned Edison to take the model and perfect it. Although a patent was filed in December of that year, Edison was reluctant to return to the disc principle since he knew that technically the cylinder phonograph was superior.

It was not until early 1910 that Edison gave any serious thought to the development of the disc machine, but once he started experiments he continued with greater intensity on his favorite invention — the phonographic reproduction of sound. Jonas Aylesworth, his chief chemist, was instructed to find a suitable surface for the new disc. The laminated surface, a phenol condensation veneer over a body of compressed wood pulp especially treated to be impervious to atmospheric conditions, was finally decided upon. Since a longer playing record was needed, Edison chose the narrow four-minute cylinder track with its reduced volume, containing 150 grooves to the inch. He had known for several years that the weakness of the wax record was in its pliancy. It was not as hard as it seemed and could not stand the wear of the reproducer point forced against the record with enough pressure to produce more than a fraction of what the record contained. The cylinder records were revealed by the microscope to have far more music recorded on them than was possible to find on the lateral-cut disc. The disc system of reproduction, on the other hand, forced out all the engraved sound in the disc. The former could not bring out enough; the latter had no more to give. Celluloid was of course considered, but this material did not lend itself to the conditions of a laminated record with a cheap filler and there were also patents with which to be reckoned. Brian Philpot was in the employment of Edison by this time and experiments went on to improve the celluloid cylinder which was considered more practical for a longer playing record than the wax had been. All of this special knowledge came to Edison at a propitious time. Many chemical experiments were performed in search for a new material which would be pliable, indestructible, and above all so perfectly smooth that no scratching sounds would mar the quality of the music. Edison said of his disc record: "I made a thicker record of greater solidity which would not shake and vibrate as a whole when played. I developed an extremely hard and smooth surface for the record so that the sound waves would not be flattened out when the diamond point passed over them." A million dollars was spent in chemical research to determine the material to be used in discs.

Ten months were spent in the perfecting of the recorder and the reproducer by the "insomnia squad", as Edison and his associates were facetiously called. The last five months were the most intensive for the solution was at long last in sight. The diamond reproducer, the ultimate in sound reproducing devices for many years, was developed by May 1911. From the beginning of his phonograph, Edison had tried 2,300 designs of reproducers to attain the climax. The ultimate one was a most peculiar device which should be described in detail. The larger diaphragm was composed of forty thicknesses of Japanese vegetable parchment, laminated and compressed while heated, but which when cooled retained an .00511" thickness. A graduated cork disc was fastened by shellac to the underside of the diaphragm as a reinforcement. A silken cord kept taught by tension was tied on the top side to an ivory fixture. The lower end was fastened to a pivoted fulcrum, on the other side of which was set a diamond cone. "By adopting a permanent diamond point," Edison said, "I got away from making the sound grooves 'grind in' steel needles. By mechanically feeding the so-called tone arm across the record, I eliminated having the delicate sound grooves drag the arm across. In other words I do not use delicate overtones to move machinery." The fulcrum was pivoted in a floating hinged weight permanently kept in alignment by a limit pin and adjusting screw. The outlet of the reproducer was fastened to a scientifically tapered tone arm connected to an oval brass horn of ample acoustical capacity. The whole formed a non-metallic transmission of the vibrations from the point to the solid gasketed diaphragm, the reproducer having no tone of its own and entirely free from metallic harshness.

His Triumph

One day, tired and disheveled, Edison triumphantly pointed to an instrument and said to his business associates: "I've got it. That gives the true result. Try it against the human voice and see if you can tell the difference." At this time, more than three million dollars had been spent in experiments. Edison's pride on that day in 1911 was justified. He had reached the end of his quest for complete perfection in the reproduction of acoustic recording.

By the fall of 1911, the triumphant inventor had plans for his new Diamond Disc in such form that his subordinates could proceed on the details of commercial models of phonographs to be put into early production. After his ardent labors in his sixty-fourth year, he decided that he was entitled to a vacation and sailed for Europe. His daughter had married a German army officer and he was anxious to meet his son-in-law. Not only a vacation but professional curiosity propelled his trip to Germany. Four years previous, a German — Hans Lebach — of Ludvigshafen-on-the-Rhine, has been working on phenol condensate products, a substance similar to bakelite, and had developed a special solution for hardening the



TALENT EMPLOYED BY THE NATIONAL PHONOGRAPH COMPANY FOR MAKING EDISON RECORDS, 1900

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|--|
| 1. JOE BELMONT, Whistler. | 12. WILL N. STERLE, Recitations. | 22. ALBERT BENZLER, Piano. | 32. GEORGE W. JOHNSON, Whistling Cuck. |
| 2. NICK SCHILL, Trombone. | 13. JIM WHITE, Comic Recitations. | 23. SENECHTA GODOY, Spanish Songs. | 33. M. D. MADIRA, Baritone. |
| 3. A. ZIMMERMAN, Cornet. | 14. W. H. MILLER, (Manager Record Department.) | 24. JOE NATUS, Tenor. | 34. FRANK S. MAZZIOTTA, Piccolo. |
| 4. L. W. LIFT, Yodler. | 15. GEORGE BRODERICK, Bass. | 25. W. F. HOOLEY, Bass. | 35. FRANK P. BANTA, Piano. |
| 5. BYRON G. HARLAN, Tenor. | 16. FRANK KENNEDY, Dutch Comedian. | 26. MAY KILSO, Contralto. | 36. CHAS. A. D'ALMAINE, Violin. |
| 6. FREDERICK W. HAOER, Violin. | 17. B. RUSSEL THROCKMORTON, Recitations. | 27. J. J. FISHER, Baritone. | 37. GEORGE I. WATSON, Yodler. |
| 7. ARTHUR F. COLLINS, Baritone. | 18. JOHN BIELING, Tenor. | 28. WILL F. DENNY, Tenor. | 38. DAN W. QUINN, Baritone. |
| 8. S. H. DUDLEY, Baritone. | 19. H. H. EMMONS, Chimes. | 29. MISS MARGARET NEWTON, Soprano. | 39. HARRY MACDONOUGH, Tenor. |
| 9. W. O. DENNING, Baritone. | 20. E. R. BROOKS, Banjo. | 30. MISS MARGARET NEWTON, Soprano. | 40. E. M. FAVOR, Tenor. |
| 10. M. GUARINI, Tenor. | 21. SAM'L SIEGEL, Mandolin. | 31. FRED BACHMAN, Piano. | 41. A. C. CAMPBELL, Tenor. |
| 11. WM. TUSON, Clarinet. | | | 42. JERE M'AHONEY, Tenor. |



EDISON MILITARY BAND MAKING A PHONOGRAPH RECORD

finished product which was of great interest to Edison. The process was patented 1910 in this country.

When Edison returned from Europe in 1912, he was prepared to delve into the problems of marketing his new disc phonograph. At the June convention of jobbers there was on hand an instrument with records for demonstration. To outwit competitors, no effort was made to display the model. Instead, it was played in a concealed position for the entertainment of those present. The piano recordings sounded more realistic than any previously made. The piano incidentally was the only instrument that gave Edison any real trouble. It was freely admitted by the Edison concern that the later piano discs were more authentic. A demonstration was given the jobbers of the Diamond Disc machine which reproduced the tone colors so perfectly that each instrument could be identified as though the separate players were in the same room. Edison discovered that when two instruments were played simultaneously either on the same or different notes, the resulting effect was a confusion of sounds rather than a blending. One listener expressed the opinion that the disc phonograph sounded to him like a man singing in a barrel. This was owing to the fact that the other discs of that time were strident and shrill in tone as compared to the Edison ones. Even the word "specie" was clearly audible on Edison's machine, a critical combination of sounds which had defied Edison for a year.

In the meantime, Edison had sent men to scour Europe for voices. This expedition lasted for three years with nearly 2,000 test recordings being made. These were later heard and commented upon by the inventor. Prominent singers and operatic artists of each city and town were represented. It might be interesting at this point to give some of the opinions of the inventor on the art of singing as he was an expert in judging voices by means of the phonograph which he regarded as the "acid test" of a voice. He claimed that the phonograph needed a voice of delicate timbre, a fresh and youthful voice, scientifically perfect in the quality of its overtones. He believed that reputation was influenced by chance and opportunity to some extent but still more by a winning personality, fine stage appearance, histrionic ability and generally long experience in the art of dramatic acting and singing. All of the latter qualities counted for little or nothing on the phonograph; here the voice was tried on its merits alone. He claimed that some noted operatic singers were found to have intrinsically poor voices when they were recorded. Also great operatic artists were often actually under strain. The voice was continually taxed by a shouting delivery, made necessary for dramatic effect due to the set-up of the operatic stage. He did not decry operatic artists in general and many of them he found as near perfection as the human voice could be, but he preferred to record only those voices which had the necessary quality for the production of a good record, no matter what the artistic ability or the fame and experience of a singer might be.

Artists Unavailable

Edison faced a situation that was deplorable when he came to record commercial operatic selections because most of the familiar artists were under contract with other recording companies. He was forced to engage what remaining talent was then available, many of whom were discovered by his scouts throughout Europe and America. Some of these had natural recording voices as Edison discovered in his careful selection of the best records. Miller was a great recording technician but he lacked tact and patience in handling artists, with fact caused Edison to lose a number of his earlier talent, resulting in a large volume of trade going to competitors. To recapture this loss, he was urged to remunerate the artists more liberally but he declared that the fee was more than adequate. When we take into consideration the costly processes involved in manufacturing the Edison disc at the time perhaps he was correct in his decision. It is so easy to hold post-mortems now that the years have elapsed. However, higher fees may well have retained some worthwhile artists and accordingly stimulated his business, substantially.

Just before the Diamond Disc phonograph and records made their public debut in January 1913, an event occurred which caused much anguish for Miller. In November 1912, Edison commenced releasing long lists of Blue Amberol, the perfected cylinder records, together with a suitable diamond reproducer and a new concealed horn model for those who did not care for attachments. Miller confided: "I thought I had talked him into abandoning the cylinder and he was slyly working at it all the time." What appeared to be folly to Miller was in reality just good business sense, not the usual characteristic of inventors. The cylinder was still in favor in some places, so Edison continued to issue it to the annoyance of Miller. No doubt the sale of these records and phonographs helped finance the successful launching of the disc. In 1913, records for the disc phonograph were few and limited in production since the method of Diamond Disc production technique was in its infancy. It was infinitely more complicated and slower to manufacture than the shellac disc. The latest hit tunes were not being produced as rapidly as those of his competitors. This fact was long a stumbling block in the progress of the Edison product. The company realizing this offered an attachment to play lateral-cut records on the new Edison machine. This was soon followed up by other manufacturers and in such quick succession that there were many Diamond Disc phonographs given over exclusively to lateral-cut records.

Unforeseen Damage

To add to the latter setback, thousands of Edison discs began to crack and warp and curl at the edges, making them unfit to be played except at the risk of damaging some part of the diamond reproducer. Many owners were dismayed at the damage the changing atmosphere did to their favorite records. Their complete chagrin was understandable when months later they learned that the

records could not be replaced. Edison realized that completely new technique in the manufacture of his disc had to be devised, but a new difficulty arose while this was being worked out. The war broke out in Europe in 1914 and the chemicals needed for disc manufacture became scarce or impossible to acquire. Edison sprang into action, and within a month set up a plant to produce phenol or carbolic acid to relieve the situation. Since other chemicals imported from Germany could no longer be had, substitutes had to be found to keep up production. The latter chemicals resulted in an inferior surface. Where the first discs had been reasonably quiet in surface noises, the newer ones hissed and scratched and popped. This detracted from the realism of quality in the opinion of many people.

Edison plunged into the work of effacing the difficulties and was making progress, when his plant was destroyed by fire that same year. Courageously he ordered it rebuilt and within a few months time the "insomnia squad" had records again on the market. Valuable masters, however, were lost and these could not be replaced as the singers were under contract to other companies. Despite difficulties, the records continued, but the surfaces were inferior to the pre-war product.

The First "Tone Test"

An event of prime importance took place in 1914 which must have lessened the inventor's anguish. Anna Case, an Edison artist, demonstrated in the first public "Tone Test," given before the jobbers at Des Moines, Iowa, that her voice heard in person matched her records. Although the jobbers long believed this test possible, they were further convinced of the realism of Edison discs by this remarkable demonstration. This first test led to a series of "Tone Tests" offered by jobbers and dealers in October 1915 at New York, Detroit, Cleveland, Philadelphia and Milwaukee. Over fifty artists cooperated in the tests subsequently carried on in all of the principal cities of the United States. All tests were made with a laboratory model because only that special phonograph could sustain the comparison, owing to its larger amplifying chamber. Newspapers printed comments which added to the testimony built-up during a period of eight years. Millions of people were convinced at the demonstrations that there was no difference between the recorded music and the performance by the living artist. In the "Tone Test," an artist sang or played in unison with the phonograph. At a random moment the artist stopped and the flood of music continued unabated. One could only tell when the artist ceased by watching the hands or lips of the performer. Sometimes the lights were turned off and the artists stole away in the darkness. When the lights were turned on and the artist was no longer to be seen, the phonograph continued its realistic demonstration. This method of substantiation was varied sometimes by having the artist walk from the rear of the room down the aisle, singing in unison with the recording.

Claims of perfection had been previously advanced by at least two companies. In



RECORD EXPERIMENTAL ROOM



EDISON IN HIS LABORATORY

1900, Columbia advertised that their records contained "music with all the charm as well as... power of the original — the voice living and real, with all its natural strength and beauty." Victor in 1908, advertised: "In the opera house corridor scene in 'The Pit' at Ye Liberty Theatre, Oakland, California, the famous quartet from Rigoletto was sung by Caruso, Abbot, Homer and Scotti on the Victor, and the delighted audience thought they were listening to the singers themselves. Every day at the Waldorf-Astoria, New York, the grand-opera stars sing, accompanied by the hotel orchestra of sixteen pieces. The diners listen with rapt attention, craning their necks to get a glimpse of the singer. Even in the Victor laboratory, employees often imagine they are listening to a singer making a record while they really hear the Victor."

The Test That Failed

Only one competitive phonograph dealer tried to duplicate the Edison "Tone Test." He was a Columbia dealer in Taylorville, Illinois, who on January 10, 1921 held a mock "Tone Test" with Ada Jones. It was a failure, which brought forth the challenge by the Edison Company "to any talking machine dealer to make a comparison, under proper test conditions, before a satisfactory committee, between a living artist's voice or instrumented performance and such talking machine's reproduction of the same artist's talking machine record. If the talking machine dealer will permit us to make a similar comparison, we will pay five hundred dollars to any local charitable organization selected by such committee if they decide that his talking machine sustained the celebrated Edison Tone-Test comparison as given by us; it is understood that the talking machine man is to pay five hundred dollars, if the committee decides that his talking machine has not sustained the test". Needless to say, no talking machine dealer ever accepted the challenge.

Not many know about the manner in which Edison records were tested before release. All were first played before a committee which voted on whether they were up to the best standards and worthy of being issued. In the early days of the disc, Edison himself passed sole judgment on the recording, and if he found any fault he would not release the record. Often moulds were junked, necessitating another performance because the original did not attain the criterion demanded by "the old man", as he was affectionately called.

More Artists

As time went on, Edison acquired a larger number of artists. Some of these were noted singers who had recorded for other companies. Their advent added to the prestige of the Diamond Disc. Sales climbed in spite of the rough surfaces. In June 1918, Edison announced a new "velvet surface" record which was a great improvement. It involved more chemical experiments, but by the 1920s there was a smoother, warp-proof record. The production was stepped up considerably in the matter of releasing Broadway hits. The white label record appeared

in 1921. This was a splendid improvement not only in the appearance of the record but in making titles easier to read. The old black record, with its etched titles, had to be held to the light to read the name of the artist and the selection. Many of the objections to the Diamond Disc had been abolished, and "Tone Tests" and "Turn Table" tests helped push the sales. In the "Turn Table" tests, the leading talking machines of the day were pitted against the Edison. A needle record by an artist could be compared to the artist's Edison record while listeners sat in front of the turntable as it revolved on different machines each in turn playing the record. Even the needle record sounded much better on the Edison with its larger, scientifically designed horn. The Brunswick phonograph was a strong competitor as it was equipped to play Edison records with its Ultona reproducer minus a mechanical feed. Although the reproduction was good the Edison records wore out much faster on the latter machine. The Edison Company missed their chance when they did not take the Brunswick concern into court to prove that Edison records could not be played on the Brunswick machine without damage.

* * *

By early 1924, the radio began to compete strongly with the phonograph. Sales on records and phonographs began rapidly to subside. People were intensely intrigued by the new sound producing gadget which supplied the hit tunes with news flashes, stock and weather reports, speeches of celebrities and historical events. The commercials had not yet become so frequent or so boring, hence the reproduced music of radio gained popularity. The fact that mainly living artists were performing swayed public interest from records toward the radio. There were some phonograph records played on the smaller stations but the commercial transcription had not made its appearance.

The record manufacturers, hard hit by radio, struck back with electric recording in 1925. Machines were put on the market with increased volume, greater range and more realistic quality. Edison seemed to ignore this new trend, probably because the acoustical qualities of the new records were not of superiority to his own. A deep, bombastic bass was the new attraction of the lateral-cut records put out by the few companies that remained in the field. Their machines were improved with metal alloy diaphragms and at first were equipped with the exponential horn—a folded six-foot tone chamber which required a larger cabinet to house it. Not long afterwards, the electrically amplified machines replaced these and the phonograph and radio combination came into being. This instrument became increasingly popular much later.

In 1926, Edison desperately began to fight the radio. He devised a forty-minute and a twenty-minute record. This was accomplished by recording at 450 grooves to the inch. Attachments for the latest models were made so that they could play the latest innovation. Sixty per cent of the diamonds were destroyed in grinding them to fit the diminutive track of the long-playing record.

This latter was placed on the market in 1927, but was not as popular because Edison was five years too late with his innovation. The fine threads were easily stripped since they were delicate and could not stand wear. In addition to this, there was lessened volume of sound, a very definite drawback. The public could not seem to learn, or were unwilling to learn, to change reproducers and shift gears. It was the old two and four minute cylinder trouble all over again.

Meanwhile, the radio voice grew stronger with the advent of the dynamic speaker, so Edison manufactured a new standard reproducer in 1928, and a new model "Edisonic" with more volume. A special loud reproducer was designed to produce greater volume on the dance discs. In 1929, an electric recording with still louder volume and an electric combination with a universal pickup—to play vertical as well as lateral-cut records—arrived. In an attempt to recapture some of the record business, Edison also released for a few short months a lateral-cut disc. Every new effort, however, seemed all in vain. Record sales continued to drop.

The quality of Edison lateral-cut electric discs was superior to those of other companies. They were more natural in sound and did not have the rasping characteristic that electricity caused in voice reproduction, especially in the earlier days. Despite the exaggerated bass on band and orchestral records in other brands, it should be noted they possessed more realistic qualities particularly in the matter of overtones. Unquestionably, recording was simplified by the use of microphones in place of acoustic horns, yet to many phonopiles the electric recorded voice discs were a disappointment since their only improvement was a louder and fuller accompaniment.

Record sales had reached the bottom in 1929. Undoubtedly the realization of this fact caused the Edison management to announce the abandonment of Diamond Discs records as of November 1st of that year. Sentiment was being dethroned for business reasons. I have often wondered what Edison thought of his favorite invention being junked for the radio. It must have been with mingled feelings of regret and despair that he gave his consent. He did make the prophecy that the phonograph would have its comeback, and we have lived to see his prophecy fulfilled in a remarkable manner. In the future, it is to be hoped that people will not forget the man who wished to be remembered as the inventor of the phonograph and the record. They were undeniably his pet brain-children and the work he did to perfect them deserves to be remembered.

We would like to thank THE AMERICAN RECORD GUIDE for allowing us to reproduce Mr. Joss' Edison article.

THE Thomas A. Edison Talent FILE

Mr. Edison's name is synonymous with innovation and invention, therefore it seems unbelievable that this great man could find the time, as he did, to do auditioning of artists and to jot down his comments and opinions.

In viewing the numerous people he auditioned, Edison made no effort to conceal his opinions. He was truthfully unmerciful, blunt and critical. His appetite for perfection was insatiable. He was greatly concerned with timbre, tremolo and articulation. He, despite his impaired hearing, was a good listener and music lover.

Considering the amount of material which was scribed by Edison, and also considering the wealth of material to be found in the Talent Audition File, only the artists who recorded have been included. These people have been carefully chosen in order to obtain a comprehensive study of Mr. Edison's opinions and criticisms of the voices and musicians of that day.

His words, whatever they were, are of course a close relation to history, therefore Record Research is indeed honored to present the personal Talent Audition File of Thomas Alva Edison.

This publication wishes to express its deep appreciation to Mr. Venable, Mr. Weig and Mr. Speiden of the Edison Laboratory National Monument, for their unfailing and valuable aid in the publication of this file.

FRANCES ALDA—If Alda is fine, you might ask her to duplicate this record and see if we can record her good using same type of instruments and if we can take her we will be open for business. 3/13/15

VERNON ARCHIBALD—Very even volume singer. Pleasing timbre—voice not extra mellow—in some notes has shaks—others none. He might do on certain songs. 7/28/13

BLANCH ARRAL—No, voice all gone. 5/16/17

DELLA BAKER—This woman is good and will be a success in certain lines. Use her. Very promising. One of the rare coloraturas who has a pleasing timbre and mellow as far as a coloratura can be mellow. 7/21/20

VINCENT BACH (cornet)—Pretty good player. Can use. 10/16/14

FRED BACON (Banjo)—Good 11/17/15

DELLA BAKER—Very weak volume. Has a bad tremolo. Can't use. 8/18/22

Phil BAKER—Most perfect articulation. Think this man could do some good work. 7/29/25

BALLARD-FAGAN—Poor. Ballard is loud. This is no combination. 2/12/24

VESS OSSMAN BANJO DANCE ORCHESTRA—This is OK. Is not loud enough. (*)

INEZ BARBOUR—singer will be OK. If she can get rid of cats on high tremolo insignificant. 4/12/14. 4/12/14

MARIA BARRIENTOS—Light voice, very good interpretation—voice not nearly as pure as Tstrazini. She is in class 2. Would like her but at no fancy prices 3/30/14

WARD BARTON—Pretty good yodler, might submit some songs. 7/29/15

MATTIA BATTISTINI—Pretty fair singer. Has some very mellow notes. He would do. 3/22/17

FRANKLYN BAUER—Poor timbre, shaks on nearly every note—Some notes has a Victor timbre: Note; Don't believe he could make a saleable song. 2/1/24

DE LOS BECKER—He will do for us. 11/29/15

BABY BENBOW—Down Home gal. 7/24/24

RHODA BERNARD—This thing is odd but her articulation is very bad—I couldn't get a record. My wife could not get it all. If she can be got to articulate, think she would be good—Try her on this and caution about articulation. 7/29/15

FRANK BESSINGER—Can't interpret at all. Very good articulation. No tremolo but main defect absurd accent and interpretation. 7/21/20

LEON BEYLE—Bad tremolo—not wanted 4/16/13

PAUL BIESE NOVELTY ORCHESTRA—Good if all tunes are as melodious like this. 12/17/19

BUD BIRMINGHAM—wax record very weak, but his other on black is bad. Since you know I am so very deaf, will you not make two or three of this man. I can't hear a word. 5/13/25

BLACK BOTTOM FOUR—No 5/2/27

MAX BLOCH—Fair, timbre not pleasing. Might take a couple at low price. (*)

LILLIAN BROWN—No. 8/10/17

MARIE CAMILL—Voice good, Extremely good articulation. Selection good 6/3/21

LEON CAMPAGNOLA—Good voice. If he comes over, get him. 11/30/20

JOE CANDULLO AND HIS EVERGLADES ORCHESTRA—Bass Ale Blues—OK. Make this! Ed, get some other matching. 8/12/26

EDDIE CANTOR—He is like Billy Murray—OK. some snap and pep in this orchestra and good combination of instruments. 2/23/21

MARIA CAVALIERI—Too much tremolo—Good voice—This is too bad—Can't use. 10/14/15

CANTOR JOS. ROSENBLATT—No overtones sharp—has tremolo—Can't use. 6/18/1

BETH CHALLIS—No! Artist has fine diction & a certain style that is entertaining. Will try her out on the trade. (*)

MARIO CHAMLEE—Has real tenor voice. Somewhat better than Ciccolini and the other gang of Italian tenors. If you can get him at a reasonable price, might take same 1/5/21

KITTY CHATHAM—Chatham seems to weak—Also boys, can't get all she says. Her chansons are weak. Can't use for this reason. 11/13/1

GUIDO CIGCOLINI—Fair singer, but has the shake rather bad. But if not too costly think you should try him with a few of the diets from list we tried to get in London with loss. artist that we failed in—Don't think want solos. 3/3/15

COLLINS AND HARDMAN—Can't hear a word.. Awful sharp. 6/10/1

RICHARD CROOKS—He appears to have a poor voice like Jocherty. You might find out what he wants—Submit music and we will pick out tunes on piano. (*)

VERNON DALHART—He is better than of old. Possibly he could do some tunes good. 8/10/1

EDGAR DAVENPORT—He is as good in this as Humphry is in "Gunga Din"—I don't hear all of either. 3/1/16

ERNEST DAVIS—Gent interpreter. 6/12/2

EDITH DAY—Awful 12/29/1

MORTON DOWNEY—These type of songs the public will not buy. There is no melody connected in sequence. The tenor's voice and interpretation is not such as gives the song any chance even if it was melodious. 11/2/22

DUNCAN SISTERS—2 trials 1st tune—11th Ave. cabaret type of song. If you connect the kinetoscope with the records no doubt they make a hit, but not by voice alone. The 2nd song better shows their voice. Blends OK but think its the personality that makes them popular. 6/12/29

FRED DUPREZ—Will take 5 or 6 of these kind of disc from Duprez if the subject is as good as this. 5/13/14

FLORENCE EASTON-Scala:-ded tramolo-sharp
-variable volume and timbre -song? not
good- Not wanted. 4/6 /13

SEGER ELLIS (piano) - Don't want this
stuff now. 11/1/26
Baritone, own acc. - Stop kidding Me.
12/22/26

GLEN ELLISON-This man is OK. As good if
not better than Lauder. 4/13/15

MAUREEN ENGLIN-Can't distinguish a word.
Miss Amireault hears all. She must have
poor articulation as she is loud to me.
No. Our reputation is big on easy under-
standing all the words as against needle
machina and I don't want to lose it.
2/20/24

ED FAVOR - Think he is all right but
should be careful to enunciate all words
clearly as I don't get all. (*)

FIDDLIN POWERS AND FAMILY -This is good.
4/29/25

FISKE JUBILEE QUARTET - Might take one
disc of this trash as a novelty 7/13/16

ARTHUR FIELDS-Singer and song OK 3/1/16

IRENE FRANKLIN -Let the Victor have har-
Don't care to put this class of stuff
out. 7/12/15

AUDOLPH FRIML - Won't sell. Friml is a
pounder and dampens all his notes almost
instantly. Every note is 50 per cent
fret noise and 50 percent music. This
always has deteriorated the quality of
piano music and always will. Of music of
the type of "Monastery Bells" is the
type the public might want to buy. Pound-
ing and violent variations of sound is
not approved and is only suitable for an
audience of blasé musicians, critic and
newspaper nuts like Anderson of the Sun
who would have a fit if he heard a beau-
tiful simple melody from which pounding
and quick dampening is absent. If Friml
has time he might come over and I could
give him some points. 10/2/22

ANELITA GALLI-CURCI - She has too much
tremola for us -Also she drops her over-
tones in many places and becomes very
sharp and thin -Cannot use. 10/14/13

REV. J.M. GATES - This fellow might be a
wonder but I can't use him. 9/10/26

JULIA GERITY - Awful 2/13/19

WILFRED GLENN - (he wanted to hear 'Two
Grenadiers' by Middleton first).
Heard

His interpretation is not as good as
Middleton's but fair and his voice is
pretty good 7/10/16

LOUIS GRAVEURE-Graveure has a good voice
and perfect articulation. It seems his
interpretation is good. See if he is
tied up - If not any reasonable arrange-
ments can be made. (*)

ALICE GREEN-Tied up to Victor-Good voice
- Can you get her. 6/10/15

GERRALD GRIFFIN-Hear every word but he is
a poor singer. Don't want him. No. 9/3/21

WILLIAM HAILLEY -Explosive-not a good in-
terpreter - don't get the funny lieping
accent. 1/14/15

HANS EMPERORS OF SONG -Believe we should
make these and see how they turn out. I
think they're good. 12/14/25

ROLAND W. HAYES-I can't see any value in
this voice. 2/13/19

PERCY HENUS - No - Voice no good.10/4 /17

ROSA HENDERSON with FLETCHER HENDERSON'S
JAZZ FIVE (submitted on Brunswick Re-
cord) - This is the limit. Can't stand
this voice. I have heard needle machine
blues with much better voices. (*)

EVELYN HERBERT-If Kerwin is Grade A this
singer is Grade B. If she has some trem-
olo you could use her - Also be good for
tone testing - Pretty fair voice (*)

MORDECHAY HERSHMAN - Poor uneven voice.
5/24/23

EDNA HICKS -No -Singer is N.G. 4/21/24

HOME O'TRIO-This is a good combination.
Very clear articulation. I hear most
of words and voices blend.OK. 10/7/24

ELSIE JANIS - Very low type of cabaret
voice. Ada Jones is far better. This
Victor record is twice as loud as any of
our records of same type. Clear, not
confused, no carry overs. Some of the
cabaret singers I have rejected have
much better voice. 5/6/19

GENEVIEVE JORDAN-Can't understand a word
-Poor voice. 9/25/23 (Re-submitted to
committee and was commented on as favor-
able and OK to use her by the committee.
(*)

DOLLY KAY - Pretty good voice-Could sing
regular songs effectively I think. But
this is a rotten tune for us. 2/23/21

VIOLA MACCAY-No-Singer N.G. 4/21/24
Think she is good-is loud-I hear many
words. Miss Amireault says hears all.
10/7/24

SARA MARTIN - No, voice bad. 4/21/24

MARTINELLI-His voice has improved consi-
derable since we had him. What bargain
does he want for making over the songs
he sung for us and how much for new
songs. 6/15/20

ED W. MEEKER -This is OK for disc-Meeker
is OK. 10/2 /15

ARTHUR MIDDLETON-This man has good voice.
What arrangement can you make for him
exclusive or otherwise. 2/13/14

JOSIE MILES - She has a good voice. Can
use her. 8/16/24

LIZZIE MILES - Awful voice 4/21/24 .

HILLER AND LYERS-These men are no imita-
tions of negro dialect if that is su-
posed to be the record - No. 1/30/23

LUIGI MONTESANTO -Tremolo bad-cause gut-
teral - very uneven balance -not wanted.
5/ 8/12

FRANK MUM -Very weak-has tremolo-pretty
bad. 1/24/24

CLAUDIA MUZZO -General voice fair-but we
do not believe we know her. 6/ 7/15

JACK NORTWORTH - Poor imitation of negro.
Don't think we want him in these songs.
7/17/24

OKEH LAUGHING RECORD - Walter, yes, get
two, they are good-get same talent as on
Okeh if possible. Our record could not
be given away -It's altogether rotten.
The Okeh has many different kinds of
laughing and few words. It's a great
novelty. 10/28/22

ISABELLA PATRICOLA - No. 6/15/20

Carmela PONSELLE-Singer has poor timbre-
tremolo. We don't want her. (*)

STELLA POWER - Pretty good (*)

AVON COMEDY FOUR-Combination seems good,
but seems as if chorus voices not clear.
A general noise goes through it mixing
it up; its blurred. Might use this com-
bination. (*)

PEERLESS QUARTETTE-Horrible! Sounds like
wooden racket that twirls. (*)

PAUL REIMERS - This is a good tenor. You
can use him. (*)

GLADYS RICE - Fair voice. Thin. Little
scrapey et points. Possibly you could
use her. 7/17/15

WILL ROBBINS - The 2nd record is a great
improvement but he is not good enough
for us. He appears unable to interpret.
He is like a school boy reciting "The
Boy Stood On The Burning Deck," in usual
monotonous drone without accent. Voice
is pretty good but his interpretation
is dead and monotonous. Tell him to put
some action in his singing, not one con-
tinuous, monotonous intonation without
change of volume. He could be good sing-
er when he can put snap in. 2/2/15

BOB ROBERTS - Comic -No, can't interpret.
Can't sing. 1/19/15

DICK ROBERTSON-Johnny Marvin type. Think
he has fine possibilities. Should have
ukalele or guitar accompaniment.9/ 9/27

WILLIAM ROBYN -Dramatic tenor. Has a bad
tremolo. Sings too loud. If sang less
loud he would be much better and have
less tremolo. He might do with popular
songs. 5/24/23

EDDIE ROSS, Banjo and whistling- Whistl-
ing impure. Banjo at let start almost
inaudible. Don't think much of this.
5/ 8/17

LEON ROTHIER-Like a basso has bad tremo-
lo. Songs he would sing have no sale in
U.S. -Might sell in Canada as a French
language record but we would lose money.
6/23/23

RUTH ROYE - O.K. 4/21/24

PATRICK J. SCANLON - Think he is pratty
good. 8/10/17.

ELIZABETH SCHUMAN -Pretty good but there
is a fine extra series of waves in voice
which perhaps is in the light reproducer
pumping. This makes it impure. She has
not much tremolo. What she has is very
rapid and not very noticeable. She is
like Case. If not expensive, might take
a half dozen. Get repertoire. 12/24/14
Continued on Page 24

EDISON POT POURRI

* Random notes *
* from the *
* Company Files *

ERNIE ANDERSON (benjo) was Frea Bacon

FOUR ARISTOCRATS were 1 tenor, Fred
Weber; 2 tenor; Bert Bennett; baritone,
Ed Lewis; basa, Tom Millar.

ARKANSAS TRIO (consisting of Kazoo and/
or blue blowing etc) were Vernon Dalhart
Ed Smalle and John Cali.

GENE AUSTIN made nine folk titles with
George Reneau and Chas. Bates for Edison
Sept 15, 1924/Sept 24, 1924 - all issue
on Disc and Cylinder. An Edison wage
scale for Austin in those early days was
\$25 per side.

AL BERNARD first record for Edison was
Hesitation Blues, Feb. 14, 1919, issued
on disc and cylinder, and believe-it-or-
not, Al was "ahead of his time!" with a
recording (Apr. 29, 1919) of 'Shake,
Rattle & Roll" issued on Blue Amberol
3854.

The BONNIE LALLIES were Jim Whelan, Lou
Noll and Charlie Kenny (piano, Kenny).

BETTY BARRETT was Marie Tiffany.

SALLY COLLINS was Helen Clark.

TWO LARK KNIGHTS were Phil Cook and Co.

JACK LALTON was Jack Kaufman.

MORTON JAMES who recorded 'Midnight Rose'
Edison 51244, April 25, 1923, was really
Morton Downey.

LOUISE FERRELL was Elizabeth Lanox.

FROLICKERS were Arthur Hall, John Ryan
and Ed Smalle.

JAMES MARLOWE, Edison artist, died March
21, 1917 at 58...Vincent Hospital, N.Y.
of pneumonia.



BILLY GOLDEN
BARTONE

BILLY GOLDEN, Edison artist, died Jan 30
1926.

RACHEL GRANT was Gladys Rice.

ADOLPH J. HALL was Arthur Hall singing
German songs.

VICTOR HALL was Victor Cockaday.

HAPPY JACK, vocalist, was J. Donald
Parker.

JOHN HOLMES was Irving Kaufman.



ADA JONES
CONTRALTO

ADA JONES, Edison Artist, died May 2,
1922 at Rocky Mount, North Carolina.

EMMA JOHNSON, who recorded Blues for
Edison was Helen Clark.

LIGHT OPERA COMPANY - like Victor and
Columbia, Edison also chose its 'house'
recording personnel to make up its Light
Opera Company. Here is a typical example
with the identities and wages paid those
performers for an Edison recording set
of Feb. 14, 1924. "Light Opera Co. #1"
(9373) and "Light Opera Co. #2" (9375).
#1 - Billy Jones (50), Gladys Rice (40),
Jos. Phillips (30), John Young (25),
Frank Mellor (25), Geo. Reardon (25),
Don Chalmers (25), Amy Ellermen (30),
Eethar Nelson (30).
#2 - Helen Clark (25), Elizabeth Spencer
(30), Ernest Here (?), Amy Ellerman (20),
Charles Hart (20), Esther Nelson (20),
John Young (25), Frank Mellor (25),
George Reardon (25), Don Chalmers (25).

McNALPAC'S ORCHESTRA was actually
Kaplan's Orchestra (spelled backward).
Here are the company notes of why the
change of name was effected.
"Serial No. 9112, Edison 51230 Roll
Along Missouri, waltz-McNalpak's Dance
Orchestra. McNalpak's Orchestra is
Kaplan's Orchestra. Mr. Kaplan wished
to be identified with his orchestra if
we changed its name and suggested the re-
verse spelling of his name as a means."
Aug. 2, 1923

ARTHUR MIDDLETON, Edison artist, died
Feb. 16, 1929 at Chicago, Illinois of
"Flu", age 47.

REEL MILLER, Edison artist, died Dec. 29
1923.

MONTAUK TRIO 'Somebody's Wrong' (8751)
'and 'You Wanted Someone to Play With'
(8750) couplad on Edison 51228, recorded
Aug. 13, 1923 consisted of piano, Walter
Wooley; saxophone, Stanley Brooks; banjo,
Henry L. Taylor.

Then NEW YORKERS, vocal group were 'Shope
- Praeton - O'Mora - Donaghy - F Smalle'

ROY ROBERT was Ernest Hare.

STEVENS LANCE TRIO or QUARTET were a
popular Edison recording combination.
Here are some taken personnels:
"Love"(8753) Ed. 51258 Stevens Trio, con-
sisting of sax, John Leick; banjo, Sam
De Capua; piano, E.L. Stevens."
"Once In A Lifetime" (8758) Ed 51240
Sept. 19, 1923: sax, G.E. Givins; banjo,
Sam Brown; piano, E.L. Stevens.

ROBERT WHITE was Vernon Dalhart. Here is
a declaration of policy by Cronkhita
7/22/23 concerning the employment of
Robert White.

"Mr. Folsum, Serial No. 9089 'Stingo
Stungo ROBERT WHITE - This song was sung
by Vernon Dalhart under the name of
Robert White. He prefers (sic) to sing
songs of this kind under another name.
If he can be worked into this line satis-
factorily it will relieve the too fra-
quent use of Billy Jonas."

GRACE WOODS was Helen Clerk.

RIM CHIPS by Sheldon Harris.



"...and the minute I said we had a box of medicine records for
sale, two crazy guys in the back started a riot!"

EDISON

Jazz Survey

In comparison with other record companies the amount of jazz on Edison records was negligible due apparently to the unwillingness of Edison to concentrate a part of his catalog to a jazz series. Yet, what jazz does exist, has been cloaked in a veil of mystery due to the rarity of these recordings for discographical research purposes. We believe that the following tabulation, extracted and collated from 5 different sets of Edison company files, will lift the veil and incandescence a path for more articulate comprehensive research of jazz on Edison records.

Now for the ensuing tabulation:

We have tried to keep the same apparent secretarial order of one major talent company file which we have examined and found to be best for its clarity and for our magazine layout.

Whereupon we have been painstakingly objective in the secretarial mechanics (we have listed everything we've seen), we have, on the other hand, been compromisingly subjective in our selection of what we believe was jazz on Edison records. We are open for argument.

EXPLANATION OF CATEGORIES:

Column 1:

The 4 or 5 digit number following the title is the master number (or as Edison files specify, the 'serial number'), a number for company purposes assigned to

designate a specific mother matrix to be pressed. The amount of takes (usually in alphabetical groups of three: A or B or C and E or F or G, etc) have been omitted due to the fact that it was a usual standard policy for Edison to issue all takes it recorded of a specific selection passed by its judges. There are sporadic listings of takes in some of the company files but a great amount of investigation and collation is necessary to give them cohesion with the following tabulation, and from the 'first look' the task seems remote.

Column 2:

To the right of the master (serial) number is the actual recording date. Mr. Harold S. Anderson, who was active as an Edison talent and recording judge during the Edison recording era, made the following important statement to us which was the key to the entire dating category.

"The artists were usually paid the day of recording. That's what they kept the cash for on hand." The payroll books we examined invariably checked out the dates found in the other files.

Column 3:

The next category was reserved for the recording judges. P indicated that the selection was PASSED. Other qualification words were REJECT and NOID. It was

the almost common policy to have the initial of the judge follow the qualification. Edison, Walsh, Anderson, Knoll, (Edison and Walsh initials were the most prevalent of the record judges)

Column 4:

The next number to the right (a five digit numerical) usually prefixed by 50 51, or 52 is the Edison vertical, diamond needle cut (hill & dale) catalog number.

Column 5:

The next column was reserved for the Edison cylinder catalog number. These were 4 digit numbers prefixed by 30, 40 or 50.

Column 6:

Usually - when the cylinder catalog number appeared, the column to the right would give the cylinder serial number. These were 6 digit numbers.

Columns 7, 8, 9:

Other columns were reserved for Needle cut catalog numbers and their serial nos, where found, and a few examples of selections assigned to Edison Long Playing records.

We believe that this tabulation is the most industrious listing to appear at this date, however it is by no means a final word in Edison Jazz research. Please direct any queries you may have to us and we will try to answer them.

Orchestra and/or Artist credits and titles	vertical master #	recording date	passed by	vertical catalog#	cylinder catalog#	cylinder master #	lateral master#	lateral catalog#	other issue
<u>ARKANSAS TRIC</u> (Dalhart, Smalle, Galli)									
Boll Weevil Blues	9576	June 20, 1924	PE	51373	4904	15829			
New Kind Of Men	9611	July 11, 1924	PE	51373	4909	15830			
<u>CAMPUS CUT-UPS</u>									
Farewell Blues-Fox Trot-	19194	May 16, 1929		52591			n-898	11049	
'Abash Blues -Fox Trot-	19195	May 16, 1929		52591			n-899	11049	
Roll Dem Roly Boly Eyes -Fox Trot-	19254	June 14, 1929		52616			n-959	11050	
Ballin' The Jack-Fox Trot-	19255	June 14, 1929		52616			n-960	11050	
I'm The Medicine Man For The Blues-F.T.	19315	July 25, 1929		52649			n-1039	14044	
Campus Rush	19316	July 25, 1929		52649			n-1040	14044	
"Mr. Anderson and myself have agreed to change the name of this organization(Campus Rollers) to Campus Cut-Ups.....H.K."									
<u>JCE CARDULLO AND HIS EVERGLADES ORCH</u>									
Base Me Blues	11177	Sept. 2, 1926	PW	51826	5247	16218			
Measly Blues	11178	Sept. 2, 1926	PW	51826	5220	16207			
That's My Girl -fox trot-	11207	Sept. 17, 1926	PA	51836					
Scatter Your Smiles -fox trot-	11208	Sept. 17, 1926	PA	51836					
Birth Of The Blues -fox trot-	11234	Oct. 5, 1926	PW	51848					
Brown Sugar -fox trot-	11235	Oct. 5, 1926	PW	51852					
The Chant -Slow Drag-	11402	Dec. 28, 1926		51912					
Windy City Blues	11403	Dec. 28, 1926		51912					
<u>CHARLESTON SEVEN</u>									
Nashville Nightingale	9866	Nov. 24, 1924	PE	51446					
Toodles	9867	Nov. 24, 1924	PE	51446					
<u>ELLEN COLEMAN</u> (colored)									
Cruel Back Bitin' Blues acc. by Lam Fowler's Orch.	9065	July 10, 1923	Passed	51200	4915				
You Got Everything A Sweet Mama Needs acc. by Lam Fowler's Orch.	9066	July 10, 1923	Passed	51200	4911				
She Walked Right Up And Took My Man Away Orch. acc.	9163	Sept. 14, 1923	Passed	51242	4913				

"Serial No. 9163..... Another Blues song sung by Ellen Coleman only this time we accompany her with our own orchestra, instead of the colored orchestra. The Triangle Co. reports a growing interest in the song.....Cronkhite 9/18/23"

"Serial No 9065..... Mr. Folsum, Ellen Coleman selected by Committee at Orange from sample record sung by Miss Baxter(Allen Coleman).....Cronkhite"

Orchestra and/or Artist Credits and titles

ETHEL FINNIE Date (1st)

Papa Will Be Gone

vertical master #

recording date

passed by

vertical catalog#

cylinder catalog#

cylinder master #

lateral master#

lateral catalog#

other issue

9675

Aug. 27, 1924

PE

4917

Payroll information:"Ethel Finnie(50), P. Grainger(15) 1st date"

FIVE HARMONIACS

Rippin' It Cff Blues(Stubbs Gordon)

11368

Dec. 14, 1926

PW

51902

What Did Romie-C-Juliet(Fess Williams)

11369

Dec. 14, 1926

PW

51902

Payroll information:"Harmoniac Orchestra(H.Squire) (1st date) 200.00"

Other file information: "This outfit has recorded for every recording co. They have a novel combination of piano, 2 banjos, washboard, combs, glasses & wine jugs etc.."

FRISCO 'JASS' BAND

Canary Cottage-Che Step-

5552

May 10, 1917

Passed

50440

3241

Johnson "Jass" Blues -Fox Trot-

5553

May 10, 1917

Passed

50470

3254

Pozzo One Step

5601

June 4, 1917

Passed

50464

3303

Night Time In Italy -Fox Trot-

5602

June 4, 1917

Passed

50515

3286

Yah-De-Dah -Fox Trot-

5710

July 26, 1917

PE

51081

3337

Umbrellas To Mend One Step

5723

Aug. 2, 1917

PE

50470

3485

Cute Little Wigglin' -fox trot-

5724

Aug. 2, 1917

Ref. E

3364

(although rejected, it appeared on cylinder)

All I Need Is Just A Girl Like You

5725

Aug. 2, 1917

PE

51081

3390

That's It -fox Trot-(Frisco Jazz Band)

5852

Oct. 19, 1917

PE

50950

3418

EARL FULLER'S FAMOUS JAZZ BAND

I'm Sorry I Made You Cry -Fox Trot-

6198

June 4, 1918

Passed

50521

3585

14129

Jazbo Jazz One Step

6199

June 4, 1918

Passed

50505

3554

14116

Jazz Deluxe

6224

June 13, 1918

Passed

50551

3610

14124

Jazzin' Around One Step

6225

June 13, 1918

Hold

3572

14125

GEORGIA MELODIANS

Wait'll You See My Gal -Fox Trot-

9476

April 22, 1924

PE

51338

4882

15800

Wop Blues

9475

April 22, 1924

PE

51336

4880

15799

Savannah(The Georgianna Blues)

9517

May 15, 1924

PE

51346

4891

15810

Teapot Dome Blues -Fox Trot-

9518

May 15, 1924

PE

51347

4888

15811

How You Gonna Keep Cool

9571

June 18, 1924

PE

51359

In Spite Of All -Fox Trot-

9572

June 18, 1924

PE

51359

Please

9593

July 1, 1924

Ref. J

Why Did You Do It

9614

July 14, 1924

PE

51378

4903

15826

I Can't Get The One I Want

9615

July 14, 1924

Ref. J

Red Hot Mamma -fox trot-

9681

Sept. 2, 1924

PE

51394

4919

Charley My Boy -fox trot-

9682

Sept. 2, 1924

PE

51394

4926

San -Oriental Fox Trot-

9733

Sept. 24, 1924

PE

51412

4930

Everybody Loves My Baby

9734

Sept. 24, 1924

PE

51419

Doo Wacka Doo

9783

Oct. 10, 1924

PE

51420

I'm Satisfied Beside That Sweetie O'Mine

9784

Oct. 10, 1924

PE

51425

I'm Bound For Tennessee

9841

Nov. 10, 1924

PE

51437

Mammy's Blues

9842

Nov. 10, 1924

PE

51438

Keep Smiling At Trouble

9947

Jan. 19, 1925

Oh Mabel

9948

Jan. 19, 1925

Orchestra and/or Artist Credits and titles	vertical master #	recording date	passed by	vertical catalog#	cylinder catalog#	cylinder master #	lateral master#	lateral catalog#	other issue
MAL HALLETT'S ORCHESTRA									
Wang Wang Blues - fox trot-		Oct. 2, 1929					n-1170		
When The Butterflies Kiss The Bittercup		Oct. 2, 1929					n-1171	14080	
Boomerang - fox trot-		Oct. 3, 1929					n-1177	14080	
Seals Street Blues - drag Fox Trot-		Oct. 3, 1929					n-1178		
HANN'S EMPERORS OF SONG (colored Singers)									
What Band Is This	10748	Jan. 14, 1926	PW	52082	(made over				
My Lord's Gonna Move This Wicked Race	10769	Jan. 14, 1926	PW	52082	5114	16094			
JOE HERLIHY AND HIS ORCHESTRA									
Cornfed -fox trot-	11749	June 20, 1927	PW	52059					
State and Madison - fox trot-	11750	June 20, 1927	PW	52076					
Bye Bye Pretty Baby - fox trot-vocal	3-11853	Aug. 24, 1927							
made over		Sept. 16, 1927	PW	52098					
Gold Digger - Stomp	11854	Aug. 24, 1927							
Rolling Around In Roses -Fox trot-	11894	Sept. 16, 1927	PW	52100					
Where The Cot Cot Cotton Grows	11945	Oct. 11, 1927	Rej. W						
Don't Forget When Summer Roll-fox Trot-	11946	Oct. 11, 1927	Rej. W						
FLETCHER HENDERSON AND HIS ORCHESTRA									
Shake Your Feet -fox trot-	9266	Nov. 27, 1923	PE	51276					
Linger Awhile -fox trot-	9267	Nov. 27, 1923	PE	51277					
Dixie Moon -fox trot-	9481	Apr. 24, 1924	Rej. E						
My Papa Doesn't Two Time No Time	9482	Apr. 24, 1924	Rej. E						
ROSA HENDERSON (colored singer)									
Don't Advertize Your Man-Kansas City Five	9812	Oct. 28, 1924	PW	51478					
Undertaker's Blues Kansas City Five	9861	Nov. 21, 1924	PE	51476					
THE JAZZ-O-HARMONISTS									
Snake Hips - fox trot-	8932	Apr. 18, 1923	PEC	51157					
Funny Feet -Novelty Fox Trot-	8933	Apr. 18, 1923	PEC	51161					
Cat's Whiskers -Drag Fox Trot-	8955	May 2, 1923	PEC	51168					
Long Lost Mamma-Drag Fox Trot-	8956	May 2, 1923	PEC	51165					
I Ain't Had Nobody Crazy (ver Me	8978	May 15, 1923	PEC	51171					
Henpecked Blues - fox trot-	8979	May 15, 1923	PEC	51172					
I Got Yes No Banana Blues	9118	Aug. 3, 1923	PEC	51229					
Darktown Reveille Blues -fox trot-	9167	Sept. 20, 1923	PEC	51247					
Salt Your Sugar - Blues Fox Trot-	9168	Sept. 20, 1923	PEC	51247					
I'm Goin' South -fox trot-	9359	Jan. 31, 1924	PE	51302	4855				
If I Stay Away Too Long	9360	Jan. 31, 1924	PE	51303					
ETNA JOHNSON (Helen Clark)									
Cold Weather Papa	9569	June 16, 1924	OK E	51367					
How Long Long Absent Blues	9587	June 27, 1924	PE	51375					
Sugar Blues	9608	July 9, 1924	NG E						
Gulf Coast Blues	9622	July 17, 1924	PE(Hold)						
GENEVIEVE JORDON									
Baby's Got The Blues	9204	Oct. 11, 1923	Rej.						✓
"BUD" LINCOLN AND HIS ORCHESTRA									
Everybody Stomp -Fox Trot-	10641	Oct. 19, 1925	Rej. W						
Camel Walk -Fox Trot-	10642	Oct. 19, 1925	Rej. W						
DONALD LINDLEY - Trumpet									
Hot As A Summer Day	10770	Jan. 16, 1926	PW	51771					
Trumpet Blues	10771	Jan. 16, 1926	PW	51771	5121				
LOUISIANA FIVE Al. Nunez clarinet Charlie Panely trombone Joe Cawley piano Carl Burger banjo Anton Iada drums & manager									
Foot Warmer -Fox Trot-	6720	Apr. 14, 1919	Passed	50569	3843				
B - Happy-One Step	6721	Apr. 14, 1919	Passed	50569	3789				
Clarinet Squawk -One Step-	6928	Sept. 12, 1919	Passed	50609	3896				
Yelping Hound Blues - Fox Trot-	6929	Sept. 12, 1919	Passed	50622	3909				
LOPEZ AND HAMILTON'S KINGS OF HARMONY									
Bluin' The Blues -fox trot-	7099	Jan. 9, 1920	Passed	50662	4044				
Dixieland -One Step-	7100	Jan. 9, 1920	Rej. E	can't get rights					
Peggy - one step-	7101	Jan. 9, 1920		50648	4006				
Afghanistan -fox trot-	7142	Feb. 3, 1920	Passed	50648	4043				
Patches - fox trot-	7143	Feb. 3, 1920	Passed	50650	3989				
Bo-La-Bo -fox trot-	7146	Feb. 5, 1920	Passed	50649	4020				
CHAS. A. MATSON'S CREOLE SERENADERS									
Tain't Nobody's Biz-ness If I Do	9104	July 30, 1923	PEC	51222					
I Just Want A Daddy - fox trot-	9105	July 30, 1923	PEC	51224					
VIOLA MC GOY (colored)									
Memphis Bound(Kansas 5)	"60	Nov. 21, 1924		51478					

Orchestra and/or Artist Credits and titles	vertical master #	recording date	passed by	vertical catalog#	cylinder catalog#	cylinder master #	lateral master#	lateral catalog#	other issue
JOSIE MILES (Color Singer)									
Sweet Man Joe-piano Arthur Ray	9707	Sept. 15, 1924	Rej. E	51476					
Temperamental Papa- Orch. Acc.									
Kansas City Five	9761	Oct. 2, 1924	Passed	51477					
Sweet Man Joe -Kansas City Five	9762	Oct. 2, 1924	PE	51476					
Mad Mama's Blues -Orch. Acc.									
Kansas City Five	9862	Nov. 21, 1924	PE	51477					
Payroll information:"9707 - Josie Miles (25), Bud Riley(10), Arthur Ray(10)."									
"9761 - Josie Miles (50), Orchestra, Davis"									
"9762 - Josie Miles (25), Orchestra, Davis"									
PHIL NAPOLEON AND HIS ORCHESTRA									
Go Joe Go - Fox Trot-	11394	Dec. 23, 1926	PW	51908					
Tiger Rag	11395	Dec. 23, 1926	PW	51908					
It Made You Happy - fox trot-	11539	Feb. 24, 1927	PW	51960	5309				
The Cat -fox trot-	11540	Feb. 24, 1927	PW	51962					
Rubber Heels - fox trot-	11594	Mar. 22, 1927	PW	52021					
Clarinet Marmalade -fox trot-	11595	Mar. 22, 1927	PW	52021					
Mary Dear-fox trot-(J. Donald Parker)	11628	April 6, 1927	PW	51996					
La Lo La -fox trot-	11629	April 6, 1927	PW	51997					
Weeping Willow -fox trot-	11630	April 6, 1927	PW	51996					
Moon Of Japan - fox trot-	18027	Nov. 12, 1927	Rej. W						
Five Pennies -fox trot-	18028	Nov. 12, 1927	PW						
ORIGINAL MEMPHIS FIVE									
Great White Way Blues -Fox Trot-	9077	July 16, 1923	PEC	51204					
Shufflin' Mose -fox trot	9078	July 16, 1923	PEC	51204					
Jelly Roll Blues -fox trot-	9173	Sept. 22, 1923	PEC	51246					
Bunch Of Blues-Drag Fox Trot-	9174	Sept. 22, 1923	PEC	51246					
Back O'Town Blues -fox trot-	9253	Nov. 20, 1923	Rej. C						
St. Louis Gal-Blues Fox Trot-	9254	Nov. 20, 1923	Rej. C						
ANDREA RAZAF (colored)									
Hot Tamale Baby(MaceoPinkard-piano)	9705	Sept. 12, 1924	Rej. E						
RED & MIFF'S STOMPERS									
Alabama Stomp-Fox Trot-	11245	Oct. 13, 1926	PW	51854					
Stampede - fox trot-	11246	Oct. 13, 1926	PW	51854					
Hurricane - fox trot-	11291	Nov. 10, 1926	PW	51878					
Black Bottom Stomp	11292	Nov. 10, 1926	PW	51878					
NOBLE SIZZLE (colored)									
Crazy Blues	7734	Jan. 11, 1921	Passed	50754	4264	15060			
NOBLE SIZZLE & EMILE BLAKE (Colored)									
Broken Busted Blues	10407	May 27, 1925							
re-recorded 7/18/25				51572	5041	16029			
You Ought To Know	10408	May 27, 1925							
re recorded 7/10/25				51572					
"Mr. Walsh.....This was passed some time ago - Oct. 14, 1924, No. 4827. Never had any character singer to sing it. Sizzle and Blake put it in their "Chocolate Dandies" show. Nothing much has been done with it, so it is practically new..Bronkhite"									
THE SIZZLERS									
Diga Diga Doo	18903	Nov. 27, 1928		52463					
Somebody Stole My Hat	18904	Nov. 27, 1928		52463					K-59E (A & B rejected)
Advert. files... "The Sizzlers are a new novelty combination - The Sizzlers are recording for Columbia under the name of 'The Whoopee Makers'. This selection is being remade by all recording companies."									K-599 (A ok)
CHARLEY SKESTE AND HIS HOT-SPINNERS Colored Orchestra									
Tampeekoe -Fox Trot-	11031	June 8, 1926	PW	51775					
Deep Henderson -Fox Trot-	11032	June 8, 1926	PW	51775					
SOUTHERN FOUR (FLSK QUARTET) Colored									
Good News & O Mary	8069	June 5, 1921	Passed	50885					
'Couldn't Hear Nobody Pray	8070	June 5, 1921	Passed	50885					
Swing Low Sweet Chariot	8311	Dec. 7, 1921	Passed	51364					
Shout All Over & Standin' In Need	8312	Dec. 7, 1921	Passed	51364					
WILBUR SWEATMAN'S BROWNIES									
Battleship Kate -Slow Fox Trot-	9781	Oct. 10, 1924	PE	51438					
It Makes No Difference Now	9782	Oct. 10, 1924	Hold W						
EVA TAYLOR C. Williams									
Have You Ever Felt Like That	19325	July 30, 1929		52646					N-1049 14046
West End Blues	19326	July 30, 1929		52646					N-1050 14046
Oh Baby What Makes Me Love You So		Oct. 3, 1929							N-1173
You Don't Understand		Oct. 3, 1929							N-1174
In Our Cottage Of Love		Oct. 3, 1929							N-1175
I'm Not Worryin'		Oct. 3, 1929							N-1176
CLARENCE WILLIAMS AND HIS BLUE MOANERS									
Ma'min' Low E. Taylor	19338	Aug. 7, 1929							N-1063 (A-rej)
Some On Home E. Taylor	19339	Aug. 7, 1929							N-1064 (A-rej)

**TEN REASONS WHY THE EDISON COMPANY
ENDED ITS RECORDING ACTIVITIES**

**record
research**
131 Hart Street
Brooklyn 6, New York

Form 3547 Requested

Although the Edison company seemed consistently to have made some money from its recording activities it went out of the business in 1929

The reasons for this suspension of activity are numerous, but several may be singled out.

1) Although the Edison company was making a shift over to the lateral process in 1929 at the time of suspension, the change came too late. To the public the Edison company was a hill-and-dale company and that was that.

2) Electrical reproduction made obsolete the entire array of machines for the reproduction of the Edison vertical cut disc. The Edison Company did not attempt to rectify this until 1928 when it marketed a console radio-phonograph capable of playing lateral and vertical cut recordings. There was no cheap machine for playing the Edison electrically.

3) Although the electrical process began commercial production in 1925, the Edison Company did not shift over to the electrical process until 1928. Even then there were no general announcements that the Edison releases were being electrically recorded. There could not be - recording activities were eliminated the company could not dare to announce that its catalog was obsolete (except to collectors).

4) At the time of the decline in Edison sales the company decided to contract its advertising schedule. This was fatal and sales declined even more.

5) The company made no effort to provide a really well balanced catalog. It emphasized what might be called ephemera. The manufacturing process was usually slow and except in rare instances Edison recordings of popular tunes were usually behind those of the competition.

6) Many avenues of additional revenue such as master exchanges, etc. were not employed by Edison.

7) Some of the business practices were damaging to the company. It is understood that the company paid its royalties at the time of pressing - not at the time of sale. That would mean that the company might have a good deal of its funds tied up in non-sellers.

8) The entire output during the period that Edison was in business was relatively small; - this in turn was not conducive to large artist payments; this led to the artists deserting Edison and the company could never seem to build up a stable roster of artists.

9) Because of the fact that Columbia and Victor had tied up most of the important recording artists, the Edison Company had to be content with lesser known artists. While these artists had fine voices they did not possess the name magnetism that generated sales.

By the time they had that name magnetism Edison lost them because of his economy policy.

10) We must also remember that 1929 was not a particularly healthy year for any one of the record companies. Even the mighty Victor Company had to sell out to the opposition and merge with the Radio Corporation of America. Columbia was soon to fold and so were many of the independents.

Continued from Page 10

JOHANN SEMBACH, (Metropolitan Opera Co.)
Let the Victor have him. 6/1/15

SHANNON QUARTET - Pretty fair. This tune is not good. There is a high tenor in this chorus. Try him alone. If they have suitable songs, I think they might be good. When all together it's noise. 6/7/17

SHANNON QUARTET (Hart, James, Shaw, Glenn) - Weak, has harsh talking timbre. It seems impossible to get people to buy quartets with men's voices. They are so unmusical. No. 8/1/22

BETSY LANE SHEPHERD - She has a very good coloratura voice and is very promising. Try her on regular. Don't take these trial records. So weak I am growing deaf. 6/1/16

BESSIE SMITH - Voice N.G. 4/21/24

AILEEN STANLEY - Fine articulation. Voice has right timbre for this type of song. A few of her best and most tuneful would sell. You say she is loud. She is not loud. Your instrumental part is loud, 50% louder than her voice. 10/1/20

MAGGIE TAYLOR - voice has improved very much since I last heard her. Is pretty good now but she broke a little on the highest note. Only slight tremolo. 5/21/18

HELEN AND ALMA TRIX - No good 10/2/15

VAN AND SCHENCK - Sharp explosives. Can't understand anything. Hayes only gets 50% - Can't use. Good song for Collins and Harlan. 1/19/15

WADSWORTH SAXOPHONE BAND - These men don't know how to arrange a saxophone. Their high notes saxophone is a combination of music and a sheep bleat. The others are fair. Sax were never intended to play this jazzy kind of music. However, since they have gone in to benefits from this form of music, it's a novelty and you, might take two or three of their best. 11/19/19

REINALD WERRENATH - O.K. for me. Mellow. Has some shakes. Very good volume. 6/10/15

JOE WHITE - Can't judge from a dialect song. He seems fair for songs of Van Brunt type. I can't understand a word he says. Let him sing a pathetic song that's not all talking and in dialect. How can anyone judge a man's voice from such a song. I'm no mind reader like you people in New York. 1/19/15

The contents of RECORD RESEARCH are indexed regularly in the MUSIC INDEX, the key to current music periodical literature

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coordinated by Ray Wile

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